



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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NEW YEAR'S AIR QUALITY WORSEN DUE TO WEATHER

HONOLULU – The Department of Health's Clean Air Branch reported some of the highest levels of smoke ever recorded in Hawaii's atmosphere due to the New Year's firework celebration and worsened weather conditions. On Oahu found levels in Pearl City above the 24-hour State and Federal Air Quality standards for January 1st, 2005.

Air quality monitors reported highest levels of particulates in the air between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m., air quality dramatically improved by 4:00 a.m.

The Clean Air Branch observes air quality through air monitoring stations located at 5 sites in Hawaii including; Honolulu, Liliha, Pearl City, Kapolei and Kihei, Maui. Pearl City reported highest levels, followed by; Liliha, Honolulu, Kapolei and Kihei.

Willfred Nagamine, Clean Air Branch Chief said, "Last year, the results were lower and did not exceed the air quality standard which could be attributed to the occasional rain at the time. This year, the predicted weather conditions of rain and high winds did not materialize, and instead we experienced very light and variable winds with high humidity and no rain. Without the winds and rain, the clearing of the air takes longer."

While the lack of wind and rain affected the ambient air quality on New Year's Eve, air quality is also influenced by amount of fireworks ignited, the density of the population in a monitored area, and the topography of the land where the celebrations occur.

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